

INFORMATION REPORT

PREPARED AND DISSEMINATED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

COUNTRY
Germany/France/Egypt/Italy

SUBJECT
An Evaluation of the Activities and Professional Competence and Capabilities of Rolf Engel, German Rocket Engineer

DATE OF INFORMATION (Date or dates, on or between which, events or conditions described in report occurred)
Oct 57 and earlier

PLACE AND DATE ACQUIRED (By source)
Germany and Barcelona, Spain, Oct 57 and earlier

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

SOURCE US citizen, former German national and "paperclip" scientist.

Source is a civilian employee in the Preliminary Design Section of the Army Ballistic Missile Agency, Redstone Arsenal, Alabama.

The source of this information is normally available for further interrogation, should this report generate additional requirements.

1. I used to know Rolf Engel quite well back in Germany, and I have had a recent opportunity to visit with him during the Eighth Congress of the International Astronautical Federation held in Barcelona, Spain, in October 1957.
2. Rolf Engel was born around 1915 in Berlin, Germany. During 1930-1932 his mother was manager of the cafeteria at the Rocket Test Center Reinickendorf near Berlin and it was then that young Engel had his first contact with rockets. While still a high school student he became an assistant to Dr Winkler who was doing some experimental work on rockets. Later he entered the University of Berlin to study mechanical engineering, although he never managed to obtain a degree due to other commitments. During 1933-1936 Engel, with backing from the SA (Sturmabteilung - Storm Troopers), tried to organize his own research and development team, but he was unsuccessful.
3. In 1939 Engel became technical director of a small rocket test station in West Prussia (Versuchsanstalt Grossendorf). Here he carried on some development work on small rockets for the SS (Schutzstaffel - Elite Guard). This was his main assignment during World War II. Details of this operation never became known and it is doubtful if any developments were successful enough to reach the operational stage.
4. From 1947 to July 1952, Engel, with a few of his former associates, worked as a consultant for the French government in Paris.
5. In 1952 Engel went to Egypt and became technical director of the "Compagnie des Engins a Reaction pour Vol Accelere" (CERVA). This French-Egyptian enterprise was working on an Egyptian government contract to develop a small artillery rocket. It is not known whether the development was successfully completed, but it was not employed during the Suez crisis. The company was nationalized in 1956.
6. In the spring of 1957 Engel and his associates left Egypt. To the best of my information he is currently living in Rome, Italy, where he is a consultant to a group of Italian companies engaged in the development of an anti-aircraft rocket of the Nike-Hercules type. I do not know whether any of Engel's work concerns unguided rockets, and no studies are known to me to be available relating to the warhead or fusing of Engel's projects. Engel probably has contacts with French and German companies but the effect of these contacts on his work in Italy is not known by me.
7. Engel must be considered as one of the earliest rocket engineers with a good background in rocket history. He also has considerable management experience,

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but unfortunately he was never affiliated with one of the larger successful rocket development programs. Somehow he always managed to be in the wrong place in the development organization.

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